(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken for providing "Electricity to all" in the next five years?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) Under the provision of the Electricity Act, while generation of electricity is delicensed, distribution is a licensed activity and the license is granted by the respective Electricity Regulatory Commission.

The National Electricity Policy recognizes that competition will bring significant benefits to consumers, in which case, it is competition which will determine the price rather than any cost plus exercise on the basis of operating norms and parameters. The policy states that all efforts would need to be made to bring the power industry to this situation as early as possible, in the overall interest of consumers.

Section 63 of the Electricity Act, 2003 provides that the Regulatory Commissions shall adopt the tariff if it is determined through transparent process of bidding in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Central Government. The guidelines in this regard have already been issued.

(c) The Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidutikaran Yojana has been launched in April, 2005 towards realizing the goal of providing access to electricity to all households in five years through creation of:—

(i) Rural Electricity Distribution Backbone (REDB) with at least one 33/11 KV (or 66/11 KV) sub-station in each block.

(ii) Village Electrification Infrastructure (VEI) with at least one distribution transformer in each village/habitation.

(iii) Decentralised Distributed Generation (DDG) Systems where grid supply is not feasible or cost-effective.

There is a provision of 90% capital subsidy from the Central Government for projects sanctioned under the scheme.

Hydro power plants in the western part of the country

2379. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number with capacity of hydro plants that are running in the western parts of the country particularly in Maharashtra State;

(b) whether Government are considering any proposal to tap resource for hydro projects in the western part of the country, particularly in Maharashtra State;

(c) if so, the details thereof by indicating how much of power will be generated from this region; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) In the Western Region 45 hydro-electric plants (of capacity above 3 MW each) with aggregate installed capacity of 6388.50 MW are in operation. Of these, 29 hydro-electric plants with installed capacity of 2825.30 MW are in operation in the State of Maharashtra. In addition, Maharashtra has 27% share of power in the Sardar Sarovar hydro-electric project with installed capacity of 1450 MW of which 1050 MW capacity has been commissioned and 400 MW is under construction. The State of Maharashtra also has 33.3% share of power from Pench hydro-electric station (160 MW).

(b) to (d) Five hydro-electric projects with installed capacity of 1230 MW are under construction in the Western Region of which one hydro-electric project namely, Ghatghar Pump Storage Scheme (250MW) is under construction in the State of Maharashtra. Besides, commercial viability of the Bav hydro-electric project State-II (20 MW) in Maharashtra has been assessed and the project is to be executed by National Hydro-electric Power Corporation.

The Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of 16 hydro-electric schemes with estimated installed capacity of 4355 MW in the Western Region have been returned to the project authorities by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for re-submission after compliance of the observations of the CEA/Central Water Commission and Geological Survey of India. Of these, 4 schemes with installed capacity of 1430 MW are in the State of Maharashtra.

Under the 50,000 MW Hydro-electric Initiative of the Government of India, the pre-feasibility reports of 17 schemes with installed capacity of 1464 MW have been prepared for the Western Region. Of these, 9 schemes with total installed capacity of 411 MW are in the State of

Maharashtra. As the first year indicative tariffs of these schemes are high, these are not being considered for preparation of Detailed Project Report in the first instance.

Electrification of Villages by REC

†2380. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages which have been provided with electricity by REC so far;

(b) the time likely to be taken for the completion of the said project, alongwith the details of remaining electrification work for all the villages at present; and

(c) the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) as a financial institution provides financial assistance to State Power Utilities for implementation of rural electrification programme against the eligible projects received from them. Under REC financed projects, 307325 villages (including 1419 villages under Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) have been reproted electrified in various States up to November 2005, as per the details given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) With a view to provide access to electricity to all rural households in the country by 2009, Government of India has introduced "Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana" (RGGVY) in April, 2005. The scheme covers electrification of all the villages in the country except the villages under the programme of Ministry of Non-conventionall Energy Sources (MNES) for providing electricity from non-conventional energy sources under their remote village electrification programme of 25,000 villages. The salient features of the scheme are as under:—

* Scheme is for the attainment of the goal set for providing access to electricity to all households in four years.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.